

April 14, 1975

Mr. Jerald Feitelson
42 Wellington Road
East Brunswick, New Jersey 08816

Dear Mr. Feitelson,

This is to let you know that the Department of Genetics is prepared to welcome you as a student in our graduate program starting this September. I must also state certain qualifications which I hope you will understand and accept.

As I think I indicated to you over the telephone, your joint interests in computer science and in genetics were an extremely attractive feature of your credentials. To tell the truth, your academic record is somewhat better than acceptable but below the customary standard that we expect from most of our graduate students. I have in mind your performance in many courses in biology and biochemistry. On the other hand, I had excellent accounts of your independent laboratory work and found your thesis report quite interesting. Above all, you came in with an extraordinary combination of expertise that happens to fit very closely with some of our research objectives here.

I understand very well - and I would not have it otherwise - that you wish to spend at least half of your time in a molecular genetics laboratory doing bench research. We have plenty for you to do in that context as I believe you may perceive from the preprint that has been sent to you concerning our recent line of work on DNA insertion. However, I would also hope that you will share our interests in the development of computer programs that emulate our own thinking and planning about these experiments and it is on that basis that this offer is being tendered to you. I think an exciting and creative program is possible on this basis and that it would be entirely consistent with the aspirations that you indicated in your self-description. On the other hand, we are relying on you to be one of the key people to function in a bridging capacity between the knowledge base of molecular genetics as an experimental science and a concerted effort to extend the principles of our DENDRAL Project to the area of molecular genetics. If you are not prepared to accept such a role for a significant, but not a major part of your time, then I hope you will be candid enough not to accept this tender.

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Connected with your acceptance as a graduate student is your access to a traineeship under our NIH sponsored training grant program. Together with supplementary stipends the benefits from this appointment are intended to exactly match those of successful applicants for the NSF predoctoral fellowships. So, they include a living allowance of \$3,000 per year, subject to some adjustment for special needs in later years, plus coverage of all tuition and costs.

I should tell you that besides the excellent facilities that we have for doing laboratory work in molecular genetics, we also have convenient access to the SUMEX computer system which might be said to have been designed specifically for the kind of research just outlined. We also have an excellent team of people with the computer science base who are eager to continue a long-standing collaboration with me and my associates.

As there are a few other people standing in the queue behind you, I would very much appreciate your letting me know at your earliest convenience what your choice will be.

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics

JL/rr